

Message Text

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PAGE 01 GABORO 00575 090946Z

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UNCLAS GABORONE 0575

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TAGS TBIO BC, US

SUBJECT REQUEST FOR TRAVEL ASSISTANCE

1. ONE OF THE LEADING OPHTHALMOLOGISTS IN THE UNITED STATES, DR. FRANK C. WINTER, CURRENTLY THE ONLY EYE SURGEON IN BOTSWANA IS HERE UNDER AUSPICES OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH. HE IS ON LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM STANFORD WHERE HE WAS FORMERLY HEAD OF DEPARTMENT OF OPHTHALMOLOGY. HE IS CURRENTLY CONDUCTING A SEMINAR AT WITWATERSRAND UNIVERSITY ON OPHTHALMIC PATHOLOGY. DR. WINTER PRESENCE HERE IS PRIMARILY DUE TO TIES WITH ANGLICAN CHURCH, BUT HE LIVES ON LOCAL SALARY ALLOWANCES.

2. DR. WINTER APPROACHED ME MARCH 8, TO NOTE THAT "INTERNATIONAL COURSE ON OPHTHALMOLOGY" SCHEDULED TO BE HELD IN BARCELONA, SPAIN MAY 15-20. HE HAS ATTENDED IN PAST, AND WOULD LIKE TO ATTEND IN AGAIN THIS YEAR. HE HAS RECEIVED INVITATION FROM COURSE ORGANIZERS ASKING HIM TO REPORT ON HIS LATEST EXPERIENCE IN DEVELOPING A NEW AND SIMPLIFIED "ENTROPIC OPERATION FOR TRACHOMA". DR. WINTER REGRETTED THAT HIS RESOURCES DID NOT PERMIT HIM TO FINANCE THE TRAVEL TO ATTEND THE COURSE AND THEREAFTER CONSULT WITH COLLEAGUES IN NETHERLANDS AND WEST GERMANY WHO HAVE BEEN WORKING IN THE SAME GENERAL AREA. (HE IS ALREADY DRAWING ON PERSONAL SAVINGS TO MAKE ENDS MEET HERE). GOB SAYS IT CANNOT SEND HIM. HE WONDERED IF THERE WOULD BE POSSIBILITY OF U.S. ASSISTANCE IN FINANCING HIS ATTENDANCE.

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ESTIMATED COST WOULD BE DOLLARS 1800. DOLLARS900 FOR ROUND TRIP TICKET AND DOLLARS 900 FOR PER DIEM.

3. ALTHOUGH A SELF-EFFACING PERSON DR. WINTER EXPANDED AT SOME LENGTH ON WIDESPREAD BENEFITS HE CONFIDENTLY BELIEVE WOULD RESULT

FROM KNOWLEDGE OF THE METHODS DEVELOPED FOR COMBATTING TRACHOMA. THE NEW SIMPLIFIED OPERATION CUTS DOWN ON TIME AND CAN BE PERFORMED EVEN BY NON-PHYSICIAN. HE PARTICULARLY STRESSED EXTRAORDINARY HELP IT PROMISES TO ENTIRE RANGE OF MEDITERRANEAN, NEAR EAST AND SOUTH ASIAN SOUTH ASIAN COUNTRIES WHERE TRACHOMA IS PREVALENT. WHILE THIS IS PRINCIPAL PURPOSE OF HIS VISIT HE WOULD ALSO BE DISCUSSING HIS "PLASTIC LENS" SURGERY FOR CATARACT OPERATIONS AND HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL GLAUCOMA TREATMENT WHICH HAVE RESULTED IN SIGNIFICANT BENEFITS FOR PEOPLE OF BOTSWANA.

4. COMMENT. EMBASSY IS NOT IN A POSITION TO EVALUATE THE IMPACT THAT DR. WINTER'S CONTRIBUTION MIGHT HAVE IN TERMS OF IMPROVED TREATMENT OF THESE COMMON EYE DISEASES. WE CAN ONLY ATTEST THAT HE HAS MADE EXTRAORDINARY CONTRIBUTION HERE AND IS HIGHLY RESPECTED AUTHORITY IN HIS FIELD. FROM OUR PERSPECTIVE, HIS REQUEST FOR FUNDS APPEARS BOTH MODEST AND JUSTIFIED. WE HOPE DEPARTMENT WILL MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO SOUND OUT ALL POSSIBLE SOURCES OF ASSISTANCE. AMONG SUCH POSSIBLE SOURCES MIGHT BE CUBAN (HAYS-FULBRIGHT EXCHANGE GRANTS), AID-FINANCED PRIVATE ORGANIZATIONS AND VOLUNTARY AGENCIES. WE WOULD GUESS THERE ARE NOT MANY MORE PRODUCTIVE USES FOR DOLLARS IN FIELD OF MEDICAL ASSISTANCE.

NORLAND

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